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REVIEWS

Essays in Municipal Administration. By JOHN A. FAIRLIE, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1908. Pp. vii+374.

In the United States students of municipal government have come to regard Professor Fairlie as one of our most trustworthy writers on that subject. His work has been distinguished by a broad and accurate knowledge of the facts and a sanity of view which render it a valuable corrective to the dogmatic and doctrinaire utterances which, even nowadays, are altogether too frequent. The volume recently published under the title of *Essays in Municipal Administration* is well up to Professor Fairlie's former standard.

The matter brought together in the work under review is not entirely new. Of the nineteen essays which make up the collection fourteen had been previously printed in various journals or delivered as addresses. All that have before appeared, however, have been revised and brought as nearly down to date as the exigencies of printing would permit. Four of the studies (Essays XV-XVIII) are now first published. Altogether the volume forms a useful commentary on many phases of municipal government here and abroad.

It is always difficult to give an adequate idea of a collection of essays within the limits of an ordinary review. In the present case no attempt is made to treat each essay separately. A few have been selected for special notice, leaving the remainder to be mentioned by title if at all. This selection should not be taken as indicating the comparative value of the various studies but rather as a reflection of the personal tastes of the reviewer.

The essay entitled "Problems of American City Government from an Administrative Point of View" gives an excellent summary of the difficulties which have arisen in our American cities through central control exercised almost entirely by the state legislatures. Dr. Fairlie is in harmony with most students of American city government in advocating greater central administrative control as a substitute for that of the legislature. His suggestion (p. 37) that the desired central control of police could be

secured by giving sheriffs powers of inspection and authorizing the governor to remove sheriffs and other local police officers is worthy of consideration. In this manner control of the police for the enforcement of state laws might be secured while, in other respects, local autonomy would be preserved.

In the essay on "Civil-Service Reform and Municipal Administration" Professor Fairlie advances a step beyond where the civil-service reformer has been able to go in actual achievement. He advocates extending the merit system to practically all the higher administrative officials. He points out (p. 44), and rightly, that there are almost no really political offices in the executive service of cities. The heads of departments are, or should be, technical experts whose duties are purely administrative and remain the same whatever party may be in control of the city government.

The sketch under the title of "The Municipal Crisis in Ohio" is a clear account of the remarkable situation developed when the Supreme Court, in 1902, overturned the governments of practically every city in the state. The evils of special legislation and legislative interference stand out prominently in the narrative. The uniform municipal code enacted to replace the system overturned by the courts is described and criticized. Owing to the action of the last session of the Ohio legislature some additions are now necessary in order to bring Dr. Fairlie's account down to date. The most objectionable features of the code of 1902 have been removed. A form of organization closely resembling the "federal plan," in force in Cleveland prior to 1902, has been provided for all the cities of the state. This will go into operation at the next general municipal election. The change in the Ohio law should also be taken into consideration in connection with the essay on "Municipal Codes in the Middle West" which is a valuable comparative study of the codes of Illinois, Ohio, and Indiana.

In the second group of essays (VIII-XIV) only a few points can be noted. The study of the revenue systems of American and foreign cities (Essay X) is the joint work of Professor Fairlie and Professor C. E. Merriam, of the University of Chicago. It formed a chapter in Professor Merriam's report to the Chicago City Club in 1906 on the "Municipal Revenues of Chicago." Under the head of "Municipal Electric Lighting in Detroit" (Essay XI) is given an account of what appears to be a very successful American experiment in municipalization. This study, if read in connection

with that on "Some Considerations on Municipal Ownership of Public Utilities" (Essay XIII), ought to constitute a good starting-point for one who wishes to approach the question of municipal ownership in the proper attitude of mind. The study of the street railway question in Chicago (Essay XII) is the best existing account of the long traction struggle in that city. The situation is brought down to the adoption of the settlement ordinances in 1907.

The third group of essays, described in the preface as "Some observations on municipal government in Europe," is made up of work by Dr. Fairlie not hitherto published. It includes studies of certain phases of city government in several English and Scotch cities, of local transportation in Berlin, municipal conditions in Leipzig, Munich, and Budapest, and finally two essays (XVII and XVIII) on municipal government in Vienna and Italy which, for English readers, are of special value. Dr. Fairlie points out that Vienna has been a neglected field of study. His discussion of the governmental organization, political conditions, and municipal undertakings of Vienna are enlightening. That Vienna now has the largest municipalized street railway system in the world (p. 326) and that its government is in the hands of the Christian Socialists are two facts which, alone, should render the city an object of interest to students of government. Italy has been supposed to have nothing of importance to offer for the study of municipal government. Dr. Fairlie's discussion of the governments of Naples, Rome, Florence, Venice, and Milan rather disproves that assumption. In Milan, especially, there seems to be a high degree of activity and intelligence manifested in connection with the city government. The elections are sharply contested, many interesting municipal undertakings have been begun and, on the whole, the city is well governed.

Only two errors of any consequence have been noted. The city attorney is no longer elected in Illinois (p. 113). The office was abolished in 1906. Its duties are now performed by the corporation counsel appointed by the mayor. The police commissioners of San Francisco are appointed by the mayor and not by the governor (p. 149).

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